

District VI Advisory Board Minutes

www.wichita.gov

**Monday
August 3, 2015
6:30 PM**

**Evergreen Park & Recreation Center
2700 N. Woodland, Wichita, KS 67204
Lounge Clubroom**

The District VI Advisory Board meeting was held at 6:30 p.m. at the Evergreen Park & Recreation Center Lounge Clubroom 2700 N. Woodland, Wichita, KS 67204. There were six District Advisory Board members in attendance.

Members Present

Gregory Boyajian
Carmen Gard
Josef Hamilton
Denise O’Leary-Siemer
Deborah Sanders
Joel Weihe
Council Member Janet Miller

Staff Present

Officer Troy Bussard, WPD
Kimberly Harris, Management Fellow
Officer Steve Jerrell, WPD
Tom Stolz, MABCD
Sgt. Brett Stull, WPD
Scott Wadle, MAPD

Members Absent

Scott Dunakey
Steve Mason

Guests

Listed on last page

Call to Order

Miller called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted. **Motion passed 6-0.**

Approval of Minutes

Sanders asked that the spelling of her first name be corrected. **Weihe** motioned to approve the revised July 6, 2015 minutes. **O’Leary-Siemer** seconded. **Motion passed 6-0.**

PUBLIC AGENDA

Scheduled Items: None

Off-Agenda Items:

Laura Tillem, 747 N. Faulkner

Tillem expressed concerns about private management of the City’s water system. She stated that private management was akin to mortgaging the water supply and was concerned that consumers might have to bear the brunt of inefficient profitmaking enterprises. She urged the DAB members and City to explore options that would allow management of the water system to remain public, such as partnering with other public agencies in the region to find creative ways to finance and manage the water system. **Miller** stated that the City will not sell or forfeit any governance of the water utility or outsource employees. The selected company would evaluate water projects to determine priority needs and costs of failure, explore other financing options, and audit current staffing levels and practices.

Doug Ballard, 920 Buffum St.

Ballard stated that he was concerned about the possible private management of the City's water system. He expressed that the selected company might not be completely honest in their contract and make the City liable for large sums of money, which similarly occurred in Indianapolis, Indiana. He stated that staff layoffs are typical in these situations and that there is a wealth of information available that would likely discourage municipalities considering this type of partnership. **Miller** suggested that staff from the Public Works Department present on this issue at the next DAB meeting.

James Christena, 2956 N. Jackson Ave.

Christena expressed concern that the gas meters at his neighbors' homes were illegally set and therefore pose a risk of explosions and that the dust from the dirt roads was causing health and maintenance problems for the residents. He stated that he had contacted many people about these concerns but had not yet received a response and feels as though his neighborhood is generally neglected.

Mary Cole, 2525 N. Somerset Ave.

Cole had not received a water bill for the current cycle and asked whether the water billing cycle had changed. **Miller** was not sure if the water billing cycle had changed, but said that she would look into the matter.

David Cardona, 2502 Shelton Ave.

Cardona complained about the loud noise coming from a church located 2455 N. Arkansas. He made the following suggestions to the community event ordinance: reduce the maximum decibels from 80 dB to 40 dB, allow parking on only one side of the street in areas that cannot accommodate two-lane traffic with parking on both sides of the street, issue tickets to cars blocking the right-of-way, reduce the maximum number of event days from three days to two days, and reduce the hours that the event could occur. He said that he would also be willing to work with the church to resolve these concerns. **Miller** stated that she met with John D'Angelo, Arts & Cultural Services Manager, to discuss some of Cardona's suggestions, but would revisit the additional suggestions with him. **O'Leary-Siemer** inquired whether MABCD could issue permits instead of Arts & Cultural Services. **Miller** stated that Arts & Cultural Services has event expertise that allows them to issue permits most efficiently and that for larger events, multiple departments are consulted.

Liz Hicks, 5233 W. 1st St.

Hicks wanted to promote the upcoming Orchard Breeze Neighborhood Association's Arts & Crafts Fair on Saturday, September 12, 2015 from 10:00am to 3:00pm at the Kiwanis Building (5101 W. 2nd St. N).

Action: Received and filed.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

Fire Department Report

No report provided.

Community Police Report

Sergeant Brett Stull, WPD Patrol South, stated that WPD is focusing on burglaries and drug offenses in Old Town and that they have recovered \$37,000 in stolen property. The Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) answers calls seven days a week and responds to about 30 calls each day. Without the HOT Team's presence during the past three years, the city's homeless population would likely be over 1000. **Hamilton** congratulated the HOT Team on the positive press it had received recently.

Officer Steve Jerrell, WPD Patrol North, cautioned residents to lock all of their doors when they are in or outside of the house, especially back doors, which are often overlooked. He reported the WPD apprehended and successfully charged 13- and 14-year-olds who participated in a string of burglaries. He also reminded residents to drive safely and to be mindful of pedestrians, as the school year begins.

Officer Troy Bussard, WPD Patrol North, reported that garage burglaries were becoming more common. He encouraged residents to lock the door connecting the garage and house and to close the garage door when not in use. He also encouraged residents to dial 911 if they observe something suspicious. He reported some break-ins at Evergreen Recreation Center and Pool by young people seeking to swim, take items, and/or vandalize the property. He asked residents to speak with their teenagers about respecting all property, whether it belongs to them or not, and safe driving practices after stopping a car that was traveling down the street with youth seated on the trunk. A **resident** thanked Patrol West for the respect they recently displayed during a long funeral procession.

Action Taken: Received and filed.

NEW BUSINESS

Metropolitan Area Building and Construction Department (MABCD) Update

Thomas Stolz, MABCD, provided an overview of the Neighborhood Code Inspection office in his department. The Inspection office conducts inspections on all new and remodeled buildings in Wichita and Sedgwick County, which includes mechanical, plumbing, and electrical reviews. The office has 15 inspectors and also handles building permits and zoning issues. One of the office's goals is to improve the housing code violation process by more efficiently prioritizing its caseload and working with the City's Environmental Court to clarify the steps of the process for inspectors and residents. **Stolz** implemented a triage approach for cases so that more urgent cases of dangerous or unsafe structure complaints take priority over tall grass and weeds complaints. The office has many performance measurements to that it uses to gauge its effectiveness during the fiscal year, but overall, the office's main emphasis is to quickly get properties into compliance with building codes.

Weihe asked how long the City was required to wait until it could sell an abandoned property. **Stolz** answered that it typically takes about 4.5 years of tax delinquency before a property could be sold but that some loopholes exist that could extend that timeline. If a property becomes a dangerous structure, then it may be eligible for demolition, but the cost burden for the demolition and clean-up would be on the City and County. **Miller** also added that the City could not simply seize a property because of various code violations; there must be extremely urgent or persistent concerns.

Sanders asked about the problem of illegal dumping in the city, especially illegal dumping in dumpsters that belong to the apartment complexes, public entities, and businesses. **Stolz** stated that although it's unfortunate, one suggestion is to lock the dumpsters so that only authorized users have access to them. If illegal dumping occurs on someone's property and there is no way to identify the person who dumped the items, it is the responsibility of the property owner to remove the items. If residents observe illegal dumping, they are encouraged to contact Stolz at Thomas.Stolz@Sedgwick.gov or 268-4460 or the Wichita Police Department. The new approach includes a stronger partnership across MABCD, the Public Works Department, and the Park & Recreation Department. MABCD handles dumping on private property, Public Works on public property, and Park on park property.

O’Leary-Siemer asked whether there had been any follow-up to the Activate Wichita discussion on illegal dumping. **Stolz** stated that the new approach to illegal dumping would be to focus more on abatement and less on criminal action. There is also a need to respect private property rights, so some

Christena (resident) reiterated that a lot of the burden to clear items that have been illegally dumped fall on the residents who are not a fault and create a financial concern for them.

Action Taken: Received and filed.

Community Investment Plan

Scott Wadle, Metropolitan Area Planning Department (MAPD), presented the final draft of the *Community Investments Plan 2015-2035*. It is a 20-year comprehensive plan for the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County that provides a decision-making framework to guide future public investments in municipal buildings and infrastructure. It would replace the current plan from 1993. It is separate from the Capital Improvement Plan and operating budget. **Miller** stated that the Investments Plan represents an enormous change because it recommends a focus on infill in existing neighborhoods, such as vacant lots, instead of devoting all resources to the edges of the city. She also stated that it is more economical for developers to do infill, and the market exists for more affordable urban housing, which raises zoning questions that could help pave the way. **Scott** added that the Investments Plan provides a roadmap and priorities for solving problems, but does not provide the actual solutions. Those would be outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan and operating budget. The Investments Plan has 10 goals, largely focused on infrastructure, and a suggested process for prioritizing infrastructure projects due to a predicted funding gap. MAPD expects the City Council to adopt the Investments Plan in September or October 2015 with support from the district advisory boards.

Christena (resident) stated that he appreciates the positivity of the plan and the community coming together to build the city’s future, because it is important that no one is left behind.

O’Leary-Siemer commented that it is good that the plan emphasizes infrastructure and infill. She then asked how those emphases were expected to have an effect on the value of land and community demographics. **Scott** stated that across the nation, more residents are locating in urban centers and that as downtown areas improve, the value of land naturally increases, as well. A lot of factors contribute to a community’s demographics and therefore changes could not be predicted from the plan alone.

Sanders asked if incentives were provided for infill projects in the downtown/central area. **Scott** stated that incentives, such as tax credits, were available to developers.

Sanders inquired about the potential for increased retail in the downtown area. **Miller** stated that business is market driven and as more people move into the city’s center, there could be a sufficient market for certain types of retail in the future. No special incentives are being provided to attract these business above and beyond what is already being provided. **Sanders** then asked about the potential for attracting drive-up and/or advance order grocery companies. **Miller** stated that those companies perform their own analysis and will locate in Wichita if it makes sense for them.

Hamilton asked Scott to clarify the recommendation. **Miller** stated that the Investments Plan would provide a very conceptual roadmap that prioritizes the city's and county's growth strategies, but that no specific funding will be allocated to the plan. The district advisory board is asked to vote on whether it would recommend that the City Council adopt the plan.

Sanders inquired about the plan's approach to the transit system. **Scott** stated that the plan establishes general guidelines and priorities, but that the City Council and departments would need to develop concrete strategies for addressing specific initiatives and needs.

Action Taken: **O'Leary-Siemer** motioned to recommend that the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission adopt the final draft *Community Investments Plan 2015-2035* as the new joint comprehensive plan for Wichita-Sedgwick County. **Weihe** seconded. **Motion passed 6-0.**

BOARD AGENDA

Issues of Concern

No issues of concern were presented.

Neighborhood Reports

No neighborhood reports were presented.

UPDATES FROM COUNCIL MEMBER

All present DAB members confirmed that they would like to be reappointed. **Council Member Miller** stated that she would invite the city clerk to the next meeting to swear the members into their new terms.

The next DAB VI meeting will be held on **Wednesday, September 16, 2015** at 6:30 p.m. at Evergreen Park & Recreation Center (2700 N. Woodland).

ADJOURN

Council Member Miller adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Guests

Bill Anderson
Doug Ballard
Mary Weathers
Mary L. Willmott
Jerry Warren
David Cardona
Lonny Wright
James P. Christena
Laura Tillem
Liz Hicks
Mary Cole
Priscilla Orta Wenner